

CSHL Newsletter

June, 2022

By Heak Chhuny, ELBBL Student

Women's Rights in Afghanistan under Taliban Rule

As of 2021, the Taliban has returned to power in Afghanistan and overthrown its legitimate government after the United States withdrew its remaining troops from the country. Upon their return, the Taliban imposed a harsh interpretation of Islamic law on the Afghan people. One of them is the discrimination against and even ill-treatment of women and girls in many aspects.¹

The Taliban initially imposed strict edicts to banish women from the workforce. They ban women from working outside their homes, ban girls' education after year six, and deny women their right to political participation as well as their social, economic and cultural rights.² Furthermore, women were forced to wear the burqa which completely covers the whole body and face, leaving only the eye for seeing. On top of these prohibitions is cruel punishment. A woman who defied Taliban orders by running a home school for girls was killed in front of her family and friends. A woman caught trying to flee Afghanistan with a man not related to her was stoned to death for adultery. An elderly woman was brutally beaten with a metal cable until her leg was broken because her ankle was accidentally showing from underneath her burqa.³

Upon receiving the information, the Human Rights Council of the UN has been concerned about the current situation and has been initiating various dialogues with the Taliban to be more open toward women and girls.⁴ Unfortunately, the discussion was not that effective even if the Taliban promised to respect women's rights and provide them with full education, the situation remained the same. The promise was merely empty words as women and girls began to disappear from the public square.⁵

In this regard, it is understandable that issues of women's rights in Afghanistan under Taliban rule are very unpredictable as the issue itself arises despite the existence of the international community and most likely that women's rights will deteriorate once the Taliban is recognized as the legitimate government of Afghanistan.⁶

¹ *The Taliban in Afghanistan*. (n.d.). Council on Foreign Relations. Retrieved from: <https://www.cfr.org/afghanistan>

² *Women's rights under threat in Taliban-run Afghanistan*. (2022, June 10). CHATHAM HOUSE. Retrieved from: <https://www.chathamhouse.org/2022/06/womens-rights-under-threat-taliban-run-afghanistan>

³ *The Taliban & Afghan Women*. (n.d.). FEMINIST MAJORITY FOUNDATION. Retrieved from: <https://feminist.org/our-work/afghan-women-and-girls/the-taliban-afghan-women/>

⁴ *Human Rights Council Holds Urgent Debate on the Human Rights of Women and Girls in Afghanistan*. (2022, July 01). United Nations. Retrieved from: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2022/07/human-rights-council-holds-urgent-debate-human-rights-women-and-girls>

⁵ Ewelina, U. O. (2022, August 16). *One Year Under The Taliban Rule: Situation of Women and Girls in Afghanistan*. Forbes. Retrieved from: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/ewelinaochab/2022/08/16/one-year-under-the-taliban-rule-situation-of-women-and-girls-in-afghanistan/?sh=74a1d5c77a60>

⁶ John, R. A. and Vanda, F. B. (2020, September). *The fate of women's rights in Afghanistan*. BROOKINGS. Retrieved from: <https://www.brookings.edu/essay/the-fate-of-womens-rights-in-afghanistan/>

Library Hours

Monday – Friday
8:30AM – 5:30PM

E-Resources

- [Asia Pacific Journal on Human Rights and the Law](#)
- [Oxford Academic Journals](#)
- [And other Open Access Databases](#)

contact@elbbl-cshl.org

<https://web.facebook.com/cshlelbbbl>
www.cshl-kh.org

CSHL

CENTER FOR THE STUDY
OF HUMANITARIAN LAW

RAOUL
WALLENBERG
INSTITUTE

OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMANITARIAN LAW

